

# ORLEANS PARISH



## PROGRESS REPORT

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT A GLANCE

7	Drinking Water Plant Assessments*
316	Wastewater Facility Assessments
57	Industry Damage Assessments
3,174,634	Hazardous Waste Containers Collected
613,853	Electronic Items Collected
197,094	White Goods Collected
198,009	# of Appliances from which Freon was Extracted
83,336	Pounds of Ammunition/ Explosives Collected*
10,082,317	Pounds of Cumulative Waste Disposed
75	School Lab Assessments

Since September 2005, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) have worked together to address environmental hazards from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita to help Orleans Parish recover.

One of EPA and LDEQ's first priorities was to ensure residents returning to all the cities affected by the hurricanes had safe drinking water. Throughout Louisiana, 190 assessments were conducted at drinking water facilities, of which 7 were in Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, and Plaquemines Parishes. Similarly, 316 wastewater treatment plants were assessed for damage.

Next, EPA and LDEQ turned to federally-permitted facilities. The agencies conducted interviews and site visits at hazardous waste storage, transfer or disposal facilities from February 20<sup>th</sup> to March 6<sup>th</sup>. During this time, 562 facilities in southern Louisiana were addressed, including 57 facilities in Orleans Parish. The site visits and inter-

views established that employees could return to work at facilities operating in accordance with federal and state regulations.

Because of concerns that damaged chemicals in school biology and chemistry laboratories could cause a health hazard, EPA and LDEQ conducted assessments at 362 schools in southern Louisiana. Some chemical containers were found to be damaged by the hurricanes, by flood waters and/or from heat exposure. EPA and LDEQ, in coordination with the Louisiana State Police and local fire departments, removed dangerous chemicals from 116 schools in southern Louisiana. Seventy-five schools in Orleans Parish were assessed; chemicals were removed from 27 of them.

Paint, computers, washing machines, and refrigerators in homes under normal circumstances are not usually considered hazardous. However, when hundreds of thousands of these items become waste products at the same time, the hazardous components in them could create problems. To help remove these materials from the



waste going to Louisiana's municipal landfills, EPA and LDEQ collected 3,985,581 units consisting of appliances, hazardous waste containers, and home electronics. The hazardous materials were recycled or disposed in landfills designed to handle them safely. In Orleans Parish, EPA and LDEQ have disposed of 10,082,317 pounds of waste as of November 30, 2007.

In response to community concerns about potential harm from firearms, ammunition and explosives, EPA began collecting these materials for appropriate disposal in January 2006. In southeastern Louisiana parishes, 2,111 firearms and 83,336 pounds of ammunition, explosives, fireworks and other similar items were collected. As of November 30, 2007, across southern Louisiana, a total of 2,335 firearms and 96,824 pounds of ammunition, explosives, fireworks and other similar items have been collected.



Left:  
EPA sampling water  
in Lake  
Ponchartrain.